

Application No. 10/751,384
Amendment dated July 27, 2005
Reply to Office Action dated April 28, 2005

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): An accessory device for use with a medical apparatus in which fluid is drawn from or expelled into a patient through a hollow needle, said device comprising:

an elongated hollow body;

a needle connected to said hollow body;

a sleeve surrounding said needle, said sleeve reciprocally, movably associated with said hollow body for movement into and out of said hollow body to thereby expose more or less of the length of said needle, said sleeve having a first position wherein said sleeve covers the major portion of the length of said needle but does not cover the entire needle, a second position wherein a sufficient portion of the length of said needle is exposed so that it is available for use in a medical procedure, and a third position wherein said sleeve covers said entire needle and is locked in position to prevent exposure of any part of said needle; and

one of said sleeve and said body including a track and the other of said sleeve and said body including a stop member, said stop member operatively guidedly associated with said track whereby said sleeve can automatically move from said first position to said second position and thereafter to said third position upon insertion of said needle into a patient and said stop member automatically locks said sleeve in said third position upon withdrawal of said needle from a patient.

Claim 2 (original): The device according to claim 1 wherein said stop member comprises a flexible member.

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Claim 3 (original): The device according to claim 2 wherein said sleeve includes said flexible member.

Claim 4 (original): The device according to claim 2 wherein said sleeve includes a plurality of flexible members.

Claim 5 (original): The device according to claim 1 wherein said body includes a plurality of tracks.

Claim 6 (original): The device according to claim 2 wherein said flexible member includes a projection which engages with said track whereby said track guides said flexible member.

Claim 7 (original): The device according to claim 1 wherein said track includes a first portion to permit said sleeve to move from said first to said second position, and a second portion to permit said sleeve to move from said second position to said third position.

Claim 8 (original): The device according to claim 1 wherein said body includes a stop, said flexible member engaging said stop when said sleeve reaches said third position.

Claim 9 (original): The device according to claim 2 wherein said flexible member can move radially inwardly and outwardly relative to the central axis of said longitudinal body.

Claim 10 (original): The device according to claim 1 further comprising a biasing spring for biasing said sleeve into said first position.

Claim 11 (original): The device according to claim 1 further including a collar operatively associated with said body and sleeve for preventing said sleeve from becoming disassociated with said body.

Claim 12 (currently amended): An accessory device for use with a medical apparatus in which fluid is drawn from or expelled into a patient through a hollow needle, said device comprising:

an elongated hollow body;

a needle connected to said hollow body;

a sleeve surrounding said needle, said sleeve reciprocally[,] movably associated with said hollow body for movement into and out of said hollow body to thereby expose more or less of the length of said needle, said sleeve having a first position wherein said sleeve covers a major portion of [the] , but not the entire length _ of said needle, a second position wherein a sufficient portion of the length of said needle is exposed and available for use in a medical procedure, and a third position wherein said sleeve covers said entire needle and is locked in position to prevent exposure of any part of said needle; and

said sleeve including a flexible finger and said body including a track, said flexible finger operatively guidedly associated with said track whereby said sleeve can automatically move from said first position to said second position and thereafter to said third position upon insertion of said needle into a patient and said flexible finger locks said sleeve in said third position upon withdrawal of said needle from a patient.

Claim 13 (original): The device according to claim 12 wherein said sleeve includes a plurality of flexible fingers and wherein said body includes a plurality of tracks.

Claim 14 (original): The device according to claim 12 wherein said flexible finger includes a projection which engages with said track whereby said track guides said flexible finger.

Claim 15 (original): The device according to claim 12 wherein said track includes a first portion to permit said sleeve to move from said first to said second position, and a second portion to permit said sleeve to move from said second position to said third position.

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Claim 16 (original): The device according to claim 12 wherein said flexible finger engages said stop when said sleeve reaches said third position.

Claim 17 (original): The device according to claim 12 wherein said flexible finger can move radially inwardly and outwardly relative to the central axis of said longitudinal body.

Claim 18 (original): The device according to claim 12 further comprising a biasing spring for biasing said sleeve into said first position.

Claim 19 (original): The device according to claim 12 further including a collar operatively associated with said body and sleeve for preventing said sleeve from becoming disassociated with said body.